

Capital Circus

By TED LEWIS

Washington, Jan. 1.—Tricky and dangerous as the developing crisis in Laos is acknowledged to be, cooler heads here are urging everybody to keep his perspective by taking a look at an authoritative estimate of Soviet intentions in the new year.

Not that the estimate, coming out of the Central Intelligence Agency, suggests that the Communist threat to the free world is going to diminish. Only that our intelligence agency, which spends up to \$600 million annually, of taxpayer money to ferret out vital cold war information, has made an assessment of Soviet conquest plans, which should relieve any hysteria about a global war breaking out in the Far East.

What follows comes directly from Gen. C. P. Cabell, USAF, deputy director of the CIA, and should be studied by all Americans. It is not happy reading on New Year's Day. But it is certainly a lot more important than a double-domed economist's estimate about the price of bread in 1961, or an egghead statistician's forecast that the Pittsburgh Pirates will finish in the second division this year.



Gen. C. P. Cabell
Assesses the Soviet plans

At the time, says Gen. Cabell in the analysis of Soviet global plans, "our best intelligence judgment is that the Soviet leaders have themselves acquired enough common sense to recognize that if they were to launch a military attack, they would suffer crippling devastation in return."

"We believe that the Soviets foresee a period of so-called mutual deterrence, when neither side has a distinct military superiority—a period called by the Soviets 'peaceful coexistence.'"

CIA's Cabell warns that this assessment should not be considered a rosy one except in the sense that the best "judgment" is that no nuclear war is in the immediate offing.

Techniques of a Peaceful Arsenal

Peaceful coexistence is the name for the Communist effort to destroy us by nonmilitary means and Cabell pointed out that "in their nonmilitary arsenal they have at their disposal all the open techniques of diplomacy, trade, foreign aid and cultural missions which, when used by almost any other country, would be legitimate arms of official government business."

Cabell warned that in almost every country there are Communist cadres, "trained and directed by Moscow . . . and dedicated to the overthrow of representative governments."

CIA intelligence reports, which were the basis of the Cabell estimate have gone to President-elect Kennedy, as well as President Eisenhower. These make it clear that the central theme of Soviet propaganda remains consistently the destruction of capitalism, "colonialism and imperialism."

The real language of Khrushchev and Co., as Cabell put it, is that of total war for the aim of the Soviets never falters. So the phony period of "peaceful coexistence" is as much of a threat as nuclear war itself, and far more difficult to meet head-on because of the type of infiltration tactics used.

Kennedy Knows Score About the Russians

This kind of intelligence information needs to be brought to the attention of those naive Americans whose hopes for world peace were aroused by the exchange of New Year's greetings between Kennedy and Khrushchev. The President-elect's response to the top Communist's blatant propaganda message about his hopes for world peace was actually a mere reply in kind and pretty terse at that.

Kennedy knows the score about the Russians from the CIA information he has received. So he merely followed protocol by expressing the counter-propaganda hope that in the coming months relations between the two governments would be marked by good will and a common desire for peace.

Gen. Cabell went into considerable detail in his generally overlooked but extremely significant address on Dec. 20 at Dallas, Tex., to defend the CIA's view that Red infiltration in Asia, Africa or anywhere in the globe must be treated as tantamount to cold war attacks on the U.S. itself.

It is not the province of the CIA to recommend the manner in which this nation should respond to such threats. Its function is simply to assess the significance of every Red move and pose the question of its gravity.

"For example, why should we be concerned about Laos?" Gen. Cabell asked. He recalled how not too many years ago "we were inclined to say that what goes on far across the Atlantic or the Pacific does not really affect us."

Kennedy and Ike Believe CIA Is Tops

Finally, he said, "We began to recognize the real intentions of the Communists. Several months ago we could still have said: 'Today Laos is in danger, tomorrow it may be somewhere else, perhaps closer to home. Now we are forced to say: Today Laos and today Cuba, 90 miles from our shores.'"

In case there are doubters about the efficiency of the CIA—and there have certainly been instances where it has made some pretty glaring slipups—President-elect Kennedy, as well as Ike believe that the secrecy-cloaked agency is the best in the free world today.

Kennedy made it amply clear on Nov. 10, two days after the Presidential election, that he was not one of the CIA detractors. He praised the CIA as it had functioned under its first civilian head—Allen Dulles—who will stay on the job during the Kennedy regime.

That was a significant act. It not only meant that as President, Kennedy would base his cold war policies on CIA intelligence estimates, but that he favored keeping the agency operating under its total secrecy lid—spending probably \$600 million a year with neither Congress nor the American people getting an accounting of where any of the money goes.